

Elimination of Reduced Price Breakfast



How Does the Elimination of Reduced Price Breakfast Work?

Schools that eliminate reduced price breakfasts only offer their students two prices for breakfast – free and full price. Students who would typically qualify for the reduced price meal are able to receive their breakfast for free in this model. This works well in schools with a high percentage of students who qualify for free and reduced price meals, but have low participation of reduced price qualifying students in the breakfast program.

The school serves reimbursable breakfasts as it normally does. The only difference is that breakfast is offered at no charge to students who qualify for reduced price meals as well as those who qualify for free meals. Even though the school only uses two categories for charging students, the school still claims the federal reimbursement at the correct income category for that student.

Schools that eliminate reduced price breakfasts often see an increase in participation in the lunch program as well as in their breakfast program. By saving money at breakfast, a student is more likely to have extra money to buy lunch. Schools find that participation, and as a result, federal reimbursements, increase enough to cover the cost of serving breakfast to this group of students for free.

Why Eliminate Reduced Price Breakfasts?

Most importantly, when you eliminate reduced price breakfasts, more students eat breakfast. Offering breakfast for free to students that qualify for reduced price meals removes any financial barrier that these students may experience. Typically students who qualify for reduced price meals still have to pay a certain amount for school breakfast and lunch. In a low-income family, these expenses may add up and become prohibitive. When you eliminate reduced price breakfasts more students participate, potentially generating more revenue from the federal and state reimbursements for the school. The more students eat breakfast, the better their overall diet quality, attendance, behavior and test scores will be.

When Does Eliminating Reduced Price Breakfasts Work Best?

Eliminating reduced price breakfasts works particularly well in schools with low breakfast participation from reduced price students. This model also allows the ability to keep food costs in check. Here are some situations where eliminating reduced price breakfasts are likely to be particularly successful:

- High free and reduced approval rate at a school.
- Additional staffing is not necessary to handle the increase in participation.
- Staff is supportive of breakfast and realizes its importance to learning.
- Breakfast is easily accessible to students.